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the "play mode" Accordingly, many modifications may be made by one of ordinary skill in the art without departing from the spirit and scope of the appended claims.

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

- A method for controlling user interaction in a digital imaging device having a display using dynamic overlay bars, the method comprising the steps of:
 - a) providing the digital imaging device with at least two operating modes, each of the operating modes having at least one mode-specific operation that can be performed on images;
 - b) in response to operating in either of the at least two operating modes, displaying at least one overlay bar on the display; and
 - dynamically updating the at least one overlay bar with both status information and interactive instructions, wherein the interactive instructions guide the user through at least one the mode-specific operation.
- The method of claim 1 wherein step c) further includes the step of providing the interactive instructions for guiding the user through a directed image capture operation.

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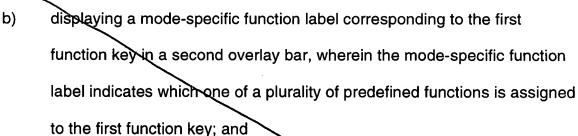
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- The method of claim 2 wherein step c) further includes the step of providing the interactive instructions for guiding the user through a sound annotation operation.
- 4 The method of claim 2 wherein step c) further includes the step of dynamically updating the first overlay bar using an application program.
 - 5 The method of claim 4 wherein the digital imaging device includes a display having a fist and a second horizontal sides, step b) further including the step of displaying the at least one overlay bar adjacent to a first horizontal side of the display.
 - 6 The method of claim further including the step of displaying a second overlay bar adjacent to a second horizontal side of the display.
 - 7 The method of claim further 1 including the step of displaying the at least one overlay bar translucently on the display.
 - A method for controlling user interaction in a digital imaging device using dynamic overlay bars, the digital imaging device including a display, a first function key, and at least two operating modes for capturing, storing, and reviewing the images, the method comprising the steps of:
 - a) displaying mode-specific information on a first overlay bar that is displayed translucently over a current image in the display;





c) dynamically changing the mode-specific information and the modespecific function label during operation of the digital imaging device to automatically guide a user through operation of the digital imaging device.

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The method of claim 8 further including the step of:

(e) automatically changing the predefined function assigned to the first function key and the mode-specific function label based on conditions existing in the digital imaging device.

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The method of claim further including the step of:

f) manually changing the predefined function assigned to the first function key by pressing a menu key.

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The method of claim wherein step a) further includes the step of:

a1) providing the current image as a live view image during capture mode.

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The method of claim 1/2 wherein step a) further includes the step of:

a2) providing the current image as a previously stored image.



The method of claim 1/2 wherein step b) further includes the step of:

b1) displaying the mode-specific function label as a combination of an icon and text.

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A digital imaging device comprising:

an imaging device for capturing image data;

a memory coupled to the imaging device for storing the image data as captured images;

a display for displaying a captured mage;

a processor coupled to the imaging device and to the memory for controlling operation of the digital imaging device and for operating the image device in at least two operating modes; and

at least one overlay bar displayed on the display, the at least one overlay bar including a translucent background and a combination of mode-specific status information and interactive instructions, wherein the interactive instructions automatically guide a user through a mode-specific operation.

A digital imaging device as in claim 14 further including a set of soft keys, wherein the at least one overlay bar further displays soft key labels to indicate which one of a plurality of functions is assigned to the corresponding soft key, wherein in response to a user pressing a first one of the soft keys, the processor applies the function assigned to the first one of the soft keys to the first captured image.

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A digital imaging device as in claim the at least one overlay bar is updated automatically based on conditions existing in the digital imaging device.

A digital imaging device as in claim wherein the captured image is a live image displayed during a capture mode.

A digital imaging device as in claim wherein the captured image is previously captured and stored image.